SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL TRANSITIONS

NEW CHALLENGES: NEW DIRECTIONS

PROGRAM PROPOSAL
FOR CONSULTATION

Prince Edward Island
Department of Education

Fall, 1998

Prince Edward Island
CANADA

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103-05316/

SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL TRANSITIONS
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Background

The role of education in any society is to prepare young people to meet the requirements and expectations that the society holds for its citizens. In earlier societies the role of education was easy to define because life was centred around the struggle to survive and meet essential physical needs. Today, we can find an almost limitless amount of informed discussion about what a formal public school education should or should not do. The role of education has not changed; but, the society in which our youth are developing has the reality of many more choices, challenges and opportunities than at any other time in human history.

Many in our civilization still equate work with worth and as long as this continues one of the primary roles of the education system is the preparation of students with the knowledge, skills and attitudes that will enable them to become productive and contributing members of our society. We cannot begin to imagine what the work expectations will be for workers in the mid 21st century so we must respond to present and short term future expectations.

The role of education for youth is to help them join adult society in a meaningful capacity with the realization that learning is a life long venture. The life long nature of learning is reflected in the technological changes of the last thirty years. Even the best trained worker from thirty years ago would be hopelessly out of touch had he/she not continued to learn and adapt to changes in the interim. There is no evidence that the pace of change will soon abate.

Students have and continue to move into the labor market through four main routes:

High School ----------> University ----------> Labor Market

High School ---------> College (Public or Private) ---------> Labor Market

High School ----------> Labor Market

Discontinue School ----------> Labor Market

Nationally, 85% of students complete senior high school by their early 20's. On Prince Edward Island the rate is about 80%. Nationally, 40% of high school graduates go to university, 30% go to colleges and 30% go directly into the workforce (O.E.C.D. Thematic Review, p. 10).

Statistically, this means that approximately 44% of the people in this age group do not go directly on to post secondary study. On Prince Edward Island accurate statistics are not available; but, evidence indicates that the percentage going directly to university or college is lower than the national average.

Since 1990 employment has increased for those with post-secondary education and decreased for those with less education. In addition, nationally four out of five youth (under thirty) who completed high school took further formal education while only one in four who did not complete high school took further formal studies. Statistics also show that the higher the level of educational attainment the higher the employment level rises.

In the past specific career training courses were available at the high school level throughout the province. These courses led either to apprenticeships or direct employment. In the 1980's "project integration" was introduced whereby students spent a half day at their high schools and a half day at a Holland College Centre for career preparatory/vocational training. This program was by and large phased out by Holland College by the mid 1990's.

Both provincially and nationally, training programs in high school were replaced by Career Exploration Courses (C.E.C.). In Prince Edward Island many of these courses were developed at the school level as local pilots in order to fill the needs left with the end of Project Integration. Initially, many of the students enrolled in C.E.C. courses were also enrolled in general or practical level core courses. Many of these courses were and are in dire need of being updated and made more relevant to student needs, the modern labor market and societal demands.

Recently, high school students from general, practical and those with lower grades in the academic stream have found it increasingly difficult to gain acceptance to post-secondary college courses and are often not equipped with the necessary skills to move directly into the labor market. In addition, the dropout rate for these students remains much higher than for those in the university preparatory track.

Rationale

As a result of the foregoing, the Department of Education is undertaking an initiative which will change the thrust of the non-university preparatory program to make it more meaningful and appropriate to the needs of the students who will choose to follow this course of studies. The revised program will emphasize academic, life, work and technology skills consistent with the Department's Philosophy of Education, the Essential Graduation Learnings as well as labor force and societal demands. The revised program will help students develop knowledge, skills and attitudes which will allow high school graduates to be more successful in either gaining

admission to post- secondary institutions or entering directly into the workforce.

Initiatives of this type, which are underway in many other provinces, should provide examples of successful experiences on which we can build. A goal is to make courses in the general level among the most attractive, useful and relevant of all of our course offerings. It is not intended that all courses be destreamed as has been attempted in other provinces, rather, we must insure that courses allow students to meet appropriate outcomes. Some courses will be available to all students while others will need prerequisites.

The new realities of a global marketplace, ever increasing mobility, developments in communications , robotics, rapid technological changes and global environmental concerns all make the revision of courses for our students imperative.

A very high youth unemployment rate which in 1996 was 16.1% nationally and much higher provincially (Labor Market Developments in Canada, p.27) has further made the acquisition of employability skills a high priority. While "good jobs" for youth may not be overly abundant, evidence clearly shows that the higher the education and skill attainment a youth possesses the better chance he/she has to gain meaningful employment.

It is the view of many people that our university bound students are reasonably well prepared for the transition from high school to university. Several support systems are in place to assist students in choosing which university to attend and which program to choose. All of the student's teachers have attended university and are usually more than willing to share information and advice. In addition, curriculum for university preparatory courses has received more attention than other courses.

There are also many positives in place in our schools for non-university bound students at the present time. Schools have taken many initiatives to develop C.E.C. offerings, adopt work experience programs, promote entrepreneurship, and provide technology related opportunities for students. Many dedicated administrators, teachers and guidance counsellors have done and continue to do all they can with limited resources and curriculum to provide for the needs of students who will soon be entering the workforce. However, most would agree that a better and more relevant curriculum, a greater focus on school to work transition skills, more information and support personnel to help with employment options and opportunities, more inclusion into the school community and a greater respect for those students who, for whatever reason, decide to join the workforce sooner rather than later are all desirable.

The Canadian and Prince Edward Island economies have undergone dramatic changes in the past thirty years. Jobs have been shifting from resource and manufacturing sectors to the service sector. There has not been a comprehensive revitalization of the non-university

preparatory program or track for students since the introduction of the General Program in the 1960's.

Another feature of recent employment is the dramatic increase of non-standard work involving part-time work, short-tenure jobs and self-employment. Non-standard work has accounted for roughly one half of the job creation in the past two decades. This means more students will experience numerous job shifts in their work lives and the acquisition of generic employability skills becomes more important than ever. This trend means that labour market knowledge, knowledge about work place safety, labour codes, networking and retraining opportunities are all essential.

It must be a priority to provide clearly defined and relevant courses, school to work transition supports, learning opportunities that foster career and life related skills as well as networking opportunities for all students. This becomes especially pertinent for the close to 50 % of students for whom the public school system is the last formal educational contact before seeking employment.

Guiding Principles

The cornerstone of any major program or curriculum initiative at the transition level must rest on the Prince Edward Island Philosophy of Education, the Essential Graduation Learnings and current labor market requirements. A brief summary of these are noted below.

Provincial Philosophy of Education

The Philosophy of Education for the province of Prince Edward Island states in part, "The purpose of the Prince Edward Island public education system is to provide for the development of children so that each may take a meaningful place in society.". (A more detailed summary of the Philosophy of Education may be found in Appendix 1 of this document.)

Essential Graduation Learnings

Any Program design must keep in focus the Essential Graduation Learnings developed by the Atlantic Provinces Education Foundation and endorsed by all four Atlantic Departments of Education. The document states in part:

Graduates from the public schools of Atlantic Canada will be able to demonstrate knowledge, skills, and attitudes in the following essential graduation learnings:

- Aesthetic Expression - Graduates will be able to respond with critical awareness to various forms of the arts and be able to express themselves through the arts.

- Citizenship - Graduates will be able to assess social, cultural, economic, and environmental interdependence in a local and global context.

- Communication - Graduates will be able to use the listening, viewing, speaking, reading, and writing modes of language(s) as well as mathematical and scientific concepts and symbols to think, learn, and communicate effectively.

- Personal Development - Graduates will be able to continue to learn and to pursue an active, healthy lifestyle.

- Problem Solving - Graduates will be able to use the strategies and processes needed to solve a wide variety of problems, including those requiring language, mathematical, and scientific concepts.

- Technological Competence - Graduates will be able to use a variety of technologies, demonstrate an understanding of technological applications, and apply appropriate technologies for solving problems.

Employability Skills: The Conference Board of Canada

Employability skills are the generic skills, attitudes and behaviours that employers look for in new recruits and that they develop through training programs for current employees. In the workplace, as in school, the skills are integrated and used in varying combinations. The employability skills noted below are applicable to positively engaging in any type of employment, schooling or community activity. If mastered they can add to a persons quality of life in any undertaking.

(A more complete listing of employability skills is contained in Appendix 2 at the end of this document.)

All of the skills listed in the employability skills profile developed by The Conference Board of Canada are already either explicit or implicit in our Philosophy of Education Document and the Essential Graduation Learnings. In recent times the gap between life skills and generic employability skills has become smaller and the distinction is often blurred. Drawing attention to generic skills necessary for employability is compatible with and can enhance a school's efforts to meet its other goals and objectives.

A brief outline of the Employability Skills Profile developed by the Conference Board of Canada is given below.

Academic Skills:	The ability to Communicate , Think and Learn.
Personal Management Skills:	The ability to demonstrate Positive Attitudes and Behaviours , Responsibility and Adaptability.
Teamwork Skills:	The ability to Work with Others .

Vision Statement and Approach to Change

Vision Statement

The Grade 10 to 12 Programs will promote student success by providing the necessary preparation for and linkages to further education, the world of work and responsible citizenship based on the Provincial Philosophy of Education, the Essential Graduation Learnings and current research. The programs will be relevant, innovative and flexible in meeting the diverse learning needs of students.

Approach to Change

> " ... non-implementable programs and reforms probably do more harm than good when they are attempted." (Fullen, p. 104)

> "Significant educational change consists of changes in beliefs, teaching style, and materials, which can come about only through a process of personal development in a social context." (Fullen, p. 132)

In order for any new educational initiative to succeed it is necessary that teachers, other educators and partners in the community have appropriate input and understand, support and see positive potential in the changes. Opportunities must be given to teachers for professional development on the new teaching strategies and curriculum. An evaluation plan to measure the impact of the program changes must also be set up if the new proposals are to be meaningful.

It is a maxim in education that "no one knows for sure what is best". Each educator has his/her own impression or reality of what a change means for them. Thus it is imperative that all partners in education have an opportunity to express and share their views on these proposals and

on how to achieve maximum educational improvement for the students in our province.

The Vision Statement developed above impacts on all students in the school system and many of the proposals noted below are intended to have system wide impacts. However, the priority at this time is to start with the programs for non-university bound senior high school students.

The Proposal

Any program format or schedule designed for a senior high school must be able to accommodate all of the students in the school. Therefore the recommendations noted below will of necessity have school wide impacts.

In order to effectively implement a program of studies that can offer a diversity of course components, it is necessary to allow for the development of modules of study. A module of study is defined in this proposal as a time allotment consisting of one quarter of the time allocated for a full credit course. This would represent a modification of the current 75 - 80 minute period full credit system. Currently, all senior high schools in the province are following this system.

Semestering is a flexible and dynamic scheduling process if used to its full potential . Semestering is a scheduling and organizational structure that sees courses completed in one semester (one half school year). On Prince Edward Island, the establishment of 110 hour credits and full credit status for virtually all courses has meant that the 75 to 80 minute class period for the full semester for each course has become standard. If we are to bring in course offerings that do not require 110 hours of instruction expanded scheduling combinations need to be examined. For example, we may need to look at developing 27.5 hour or 55 hour modules for courses. Indeed, it might be feasible to package two related 27.5 hour modules to create a half credit minimum for scheduling and transcript purposes. (An example is included in Appendix 3.) Ideally, all courses could be divided into modules so that additional segments of a course could be offered without adding a full credit as is presently the case. This would also allow schools to offer different length class periods.

Another expressed concern is the fact that students following certain programs do not have enough room on their schedule to fit all the courses they wish to take. In order to accommodate this concern an option might be to reduce provincial credit time to 90 hours and allow students to take as many as ten courses a year as opposed to the present eight. This would also have the effect of shifting the length of a class to 60 minutes which many would argue would be better for the students we are targeting in this initiative. Even within this system modules for courses could also be developed. (See an example in Appendix 4.)

The merits and shortcomings of both the 110 hour and 90 hour full credit units need to be examined and discussed by the partners involved before a final decision can be made. Recommendation 1 can be accommodated through either of these units.

Recommendation 1 - The scheduling and program design of senior high school courses allow for the development and delivery of 20 to 30 hour course modules.

The grade 10 year in senior high school should be regarded as a transition year before students embark on specific career directions. It should allow students to obtain the required academic skills while also providing the opportunity to explore other interest or career options. The modular system noted above will allow for this flexibility. At the same time students should be able to retain the option to move to the level of courses that best suits their needs in Grade 11. This may be accomplished by either having all students integrated in grade 10 courses (such as the present K.I.S.H. pilot) or by insuring that a student who excels in a Grade 10 non-university preparatory course can make the transition to a university preparatory course if so desired.

Recommendation 2 - The grade 10 year be considered a transition year before decisions are finalized on career paths to be followed. An integrated or other flexible model be adopted to allow for this to happen.

The grade 10 year will help form the basis for further study, career paths and future decision making. Therefore, it would seem reasonable to suggest that a series of modules centred on life skills such as decision making, study skills, conflict resolution, relationships, keyboarding, health and physical fitness should be required for all students.

Recommendation 3 - Life Skills modules be developed and be required to be taken at the grade 10 level.

Where possible some introductory C.E.C. or Career/Technology Studies (CTS) courses should also remain available for grade 10 students.

The need to promote relevancy in school courses needs to be supported by allowing students to gain experience in the community. This may be obtained through cooperative work experience, job shadowing, volunteerism, apprenticeships or other similar programs.

Recommendation 4 - Each student enrolled in a non-university program of studies be required to complete the equivalent of two credits of work experience, voluntary community service or related studies prior to graduation.

Students embarking to the work force directly after high school presently receive little specific preparation for this transition from their school program. In addition, they have little to show potential employers other than their transcript of marks and in some cases a resume. Each student leaving school to enter the workforce should have the opportunity to have a personal employability skills profile, portfolio and resume completed in order to enhance their employment

opportunities. In addition, certain employment readiness modules need to be made available to students. These modules could include such topics as employee rights and responsibilities, work place safety, payroll and taxes, workplace dynamics, discrimination and other related topics.

Recommendation 5 - School to Work/Life Transition modules be established and all students considering moving directly into the workforce from high school be required to take it.

Recommendation 6 - All students planning to enter the workforce directly from High School have the opportunity to complete a personal employability skills profile, portfolio and resume. These could be accomplished as one of the School to Work/Life Transition modules.

In order to promote the concept that learning is not restricted to inside the classroom, it seems both logical and consistent to acknowledge and give credit for learnings that students have attained that involve as much or more time on task and rigour as our school curricular offerings. Approved non-school courses, extensive volunteer or work experience or extensive study or other planned activities could be considered. Provincial guidelines will have to be established to help schools determine what qualifies for credit and to what value.

Recommendation 7 - Up to the equivalent of two credits be granted to students for learning done outside of a school credit program in accordance with provincially developed guidelines.

Students need to be given the opportunity to establish as many networking contacts as possible with the business community, training institutions and programs as well as with their elected representatives. Present Career Day Programs are excellent examples of what can and has been done in this area. In order to further facilitate these opportunities, teachers and schools are encouraged to access and invite guest speakers from the aforementioned areas to make presentations to classes and where appropriate, to larger assemblies. Such presentations are to be considered as part of valid instructional time and can serve as valuable focal points for class work.

Recommendation 8 - Schools be encouraged and supported in bringing community resource people into the classrooms and school in order to help students gain insight into the current workings of the local society, observe role models and help establish networking contacts with the community at large.

Many of the recommendations noted above need to take advantage of and use informational technology in order to support student learning and personal development. It is essential that all students be given the opportunity to receive instruction in and use computer and other related technology during their high school years. Where possible Informational Technology should be integrated into all course offerings.

Recommendation 9 - All students receive instruction in and have opportunities to use informational technology during their senior high school years.

One of the strategies to be promoted in classes is resource based learning. In order for this to be effective it is necessary to expand our resource centre resources to include more teaching and learning resources that support this imitative. This will require that expenditures be made to upgrade our library resources and to provide links to other resource facilities that support school to work/life transitions. This initiative can receive input from the consultants named below.

Recommendation 10 - Existing resource centres in senior high schools be upgraded by adding more resources and/or establishing links with other resource facilities that support school to work/life transitions.

Unfortunately, in spite of our best efforts a number of students will discontinue or drop out of school in senior high school. These students often face a difficult time in obtaining and keeping meaningful employment and are statistically less likely to return to school for further training than their graduating counterparts. Schools should develop a process for ensuring that students leaving school prior to graduating be made aware of other training and employment opportunities and be asked to feel free to access the school counsellor for future career consultations. One of the functions of the School to Work Labor Market Outreach Workers noted below could be to insure that such a procedure is in place. In addition, a high school exit certificate should be given to each departing student acknowledging the student's achievements in high school up to the time of departure.

Recommendation 11 - Senior high schools develop a process to ensure that departing students are apprised of training and employment opportunities and receive a high school exit certificate outlining their high school completions up to the time of their departure.

In order to lend credibility to the Apprenticeship program and other courses at the senior high school level and to give recognition for student accomplishments it would seem logical to

explore the possibility of establishing an articulation agreement with Holland College and other post-secondary training institutions whereby studies completed in high school would be recognized for direct entry or advanced standing in similiar courses at the post-secondary level.

In some instances it may be possible to start a post secondary program while still in high school and count earned credits for high school graduation requirements as well.

Recommendation 12 - The Department of Education pursue the possibility of establishing articulation agreements with post-secondary training institutions whereby they give special recognition to certain high school courses or programs.

A major area of concern at present is the state of the core curriculum offerings for non university preparatory courses in senior high school. It is imperative that curriculum for these courses be redesigned to make them more experiential, relevant and up to date for the students enrolled in these courses. Direct connections with work or future career training must be included. Courses should be developed in a modular format with certain modules being compulsory and other ones being optional. These courses should reflect a focus on employability and life skills and need to avoid repetition or overlap. At the senior high level these courses should help prepare students to enter the workforce or pursue related fields of study.

Recommendation 13 - That a consultant or consultants be employed by the Department of Education with expertise in the areas of school to work transitions and curriculum development to work with existing consultants and teachers in the development of non-university preparatory modules in mathematics, English, science and social studies as well as lead in the development of life skills and school to work transition modules.

The development of revised and new core programs to replace the existing general level courses must be a high and urgent priority that needs to be accomplished as quickly as possible.

At the grade 11-12 levels it is important that we retain and build on present Vocational Training, Work Experience and CEC offerings. There is a need to provide schools with frameworks and models on which to structure their CTS modules and courses taking into account available school and community facilities. Work experience, job shadowing, apprenticeships and work study programs should also be supported and expanded. Career modules should also be organized into strands with introductory, intermediate and advanced levels of difficulty.

An example of a strand could be primary industries with offerings in agriculture, fisheries and forestry. Other government departments and agencies as well as the private sector could lend support in developing these offerings.

Recommendation 14 - A consultant be employed and given the responsibility to coordinate and review existing offerings and spearhead the development of new Apprenticeship, C.E.C., and C.T.S. offerings as well as review and develop guidelines and supports for all work related programs. This consultant will work closely with the schools and for the first three years will be assigned solely to senior high schools.

During the grade 11-12 years there will be three main elements in programs for students not following the university route. There will be school based learning that includes information on career options, career counselling and career preparation as well as applied academics linked to workplace situations. There will be work- based learning that provides meaningful experiences in the workplace for all students and connecting activities that lead to contacts and partnerships among schools, the local business community, higher education institutions and other institutions. The idea is to make studies in the grade 11-12 years purposeful, practical and relevant to the student's future. It seems ironic that quite often the students that are classified as being immature or irresponsible are the students who are often in charge of running a business in the evenings or on a week-end. There is a need to change the climate in our courses and schools to give students more respect and to acknowledge what they can do and build on these talents more than we have done in the past. Steps must be taken to decrease the we - they atmosphere and have a model where all are working for the same goal. We need to be prepared to involve our students as partners in the learning process. This direction will necessitate an examination of many facets of our schools operation.

Recommendation 15 - School to Work Labor Market Outreach Workers be employed to serve the needs of non-university bound students by providing up to date labour market information for students, serve as advocates for these students within the school community, provide individual career information and put together data to track the career routes taken by senior high school graduates.

Frequently, teachers are assigned to non-university preparatory courses on the basis of what is left over. It is often assumed that because of less depth of content that anyone can teach these courses. This has frequently led to teachers teaching general level courses who have had neither the training or the inclination to teach these offerings. In addition, each year often saw a new person teaching the course. This has led to less than an ideal situation and has made any in-servicing that has been done very short term effective.

Teachers noted above need to be given opportunities to expand their collection of teaching and assessment strategies and to compare their use of effective and ineffective methodologies with teachers who teach similar modules or courses. The necessary in-servicing can happen either in concert with program development or through strategy workshops for

teachers. Schools should be encouraged to designate a contact teacher or department head through whom in-servicing can be coordinated or directed.

Recommendation 16 - In-servicing be provided on effective teaching and evaluation strategies for teachers of non-university preparatory modules or courses and a contact teacher or department head be designated in each school to help coordinate in-service offerings and to serve as a mentor for teachers teaching these courses for the first time. Where possible, a high priority be placed on insuring that teachers be assigned to teach non-university preparatory modules or courses on a long term basis.

Teachers of students preparing for the workplace should also be encouraged to be familiar with the workings of work environments other than schools. Frequently it is difficult for teachers to keep up with changes in work place expectations and some teachers have never experienced work outside the school structure.

Recommendation 17 - That opportunities be made available for teachers of non-university bound students to experience the modern workplace through employee exchanges , job - shadowing or similar opportunities.

The carrying out of extensive in-service or job shadowing projects is difficult at present as teachers do not want to be away from their students for extended time periods and the school routine is severely disrupted when too many teachers are away at any one time. This is especially the case for shop or general classes where qualified and experienced substitute teachers are often not available. It may be worthwhile to examine the possibility of using alternate models and schedules for delivering in-service or workplace experience for teachers in order to lessen classroom disruptions during the school year.

Recommendation 18 - The Department of Education meet with the P.E.I.T.F. to discuss the possibility of having some in-service sessions or programs in areas of predetermined need carried out using an alternate schedule in order to minimize classroom disruptions during the school year.

The recommendations noted above, if implemented, should help make our non-university program more attractive, relevant, useful and vibrant than is presently the case. In a labour market that is showing signs of improved employment opportunities it is vital for the personal fulfilment of our graduating students and for the economy that we provide the best education possible. Past experience should teach us that students in a non-university preparatory track are

often very intelligent, resourceful, successful and in many instances have become leaders in our communities. The academic elitism that creeps into our education system must be kept in check by the realization that all students plan to ultimately join the work force - it is just that some get there quicker than others!

Impact on Present Structure

The desired impact of the proposals noted above will be to enhance learning and career opportunities for all students while positively strengthening school climates by regarding all course offerings as equally valid and worthwhile. The strong course offerings that presently exist in career areas will continue and be strengthened by additional offerings and opportunities. The review of how to best use the semester system and the gradual adoption of modularized course components should allow for more scheduling flexibility as well as eliminating the all or nothing dilemma we now face when trying to add or delete areas of study to or from the curriculum. For example, if we want to add a section on study skills at present it is difficult to do so without creating a new full credit course or eroding an existing offering.

The university preparatory program will be strengthened with the inclusion of a Grade 10 Life Skills course as well as with other courses of interest for all students.

The proposals will make the scheduling process a little more complex but will allow for more combinations of offerings. The supports proposed in new course development and work place/career information should provide an opportunity to help make senior high school more important, meaningful, challenging and relevant for a greater number of students.

If it is deemed appropriate to move to 90 hour credits an adjustment of all courses will have to happen in order to adjust to the new time frames.

In any event we must not lose sight of the fact that much of what we are now doing is positive and will serve as an excellent base upon which to build. The addition of new resources, approaches and directions should make our future senior high school offerings second to none in the country.

Present A.P.E.F. initiatives, plus the proposals above, will hopefully insure a high standard of senior high school education for all students in the province as we move into the 21st century.

Input into the Proposal

In order for any comprehensive change to take place it is necessary to obtain input and listen to the modifications and new proposals from the various partners in education as well as the community at large. Opportunities will be provided for input from within the Department of Education, school boards, senior high school principals, senior high school staffs, P.E.I. Teachers' Federation, students, Home and School Associations, School Councils, Higher Education (Including Holland College and U.P.E.I.), the business community and the general public.

A steering committee will be established to examine input received and to recommend changes and additions to this initial proposal. The steering committee will be expected to make final recommendations.

The present proposal is a step on the road to determining what is needed to strengthen senior high school education in Prince Edward Island for the 21st century.

Requirements

Curriculum Development - One of the great challenges presented by the proposals is the review of all non - university preparatory senior high school offerings and the development of new modules and courses to fill identified needs. In an era when the development of an outcomes based curriculum document for a single course can take months to complete we must be prepared to borrow from other provinces and jurisdictions and not include any non-essential information in our guides. Even so the task of course development will be a challenging one. The proposals noted above call for the creation of two new consultant positions to help facilitate this large undertaking. Other significant expenditures for resources, training, technological supports and program development will also have to be considered.

Professional Development/Teacher In-Service - The development of new curriculum combined with some different approaches to instruction will necessitate a comprehensive program of in-service for teachers. At present this is a challenge as in-service can only be carried out when school is in session and this puts stress on all of the partners in education. Discussions need to happen on the feasibility of having teachers undertake some in-servicing at alternate times.

In order for any program improvements to succeed it is necessary that teachers endorse, support and be knowledgable about the new programs and the teaching and assessment strategies that can support them. Opportunities to share views with others teaching similar courses and work or college visits can also enhance a teacher's course preparation. Professional development and in-servicing opportunities for consultants and teachers must be a high priority in this program revision.

Learning Resources - More print and on-line resources need to be made available that relate to school to work/life transition topics. In addition, use must be made of community resources and course offerings must be designed to take full advantage of local opportunities.

School facilities need to continue to be upgraded so that a variety of career exploration and technology based courses can be offered to all of our students. Computer access and upgrades need to continue to expand in order to fill ever increasing needs.

Partnerships - People in the community at large and the business community in particular have been very willing partners in programs such as cooperative education and entrepreneurship. These excellent contacts and the support they provide need to be maintained and expanded to other areas such as apprenticeship training, job shadowing, and teacher work exchanges.

Stronger partnerships need to be forged with Holland College and other training institutions. Connections need to be established and support sought from the Human Resources

and Development Corporation (H.R.D.C.), the Knowledge Economy Partnership (K.E.P.), A.C.O.A. and other similar programs and institutions.

The general public needs to be kept informed about the initiatives undertaken in our schools and about the achievements of our students and staffs.

Implementation Strategy - While certain parts of the proposal may have more appeal to individual educators than others it is intended that after input is received and modification of the proposal is completed a complete list of proposals be accepted as a package as so many of the proposals are inter-connected. When the proposals are finalized priorities will need to be established as to what to do first. It would be reasonable to anticipate that full implementation would take at least five years to complete.

The priorization of which proposals to do first will ultimately be a Department of Education responsibility based on input from the education partners and fiscal realities with continuing input coming from the Senior High School Standing Committee.

Communication Strategy - When the proposal is finalized and approved it needs to be highly publicized both to inform the public and to help counter the negative image associated with the present general course offerings. The public consultations on the proposal will set the stage for the follow up publicity when the program is launched. The theme of promoting school initiative and flexibility within provincial guidelines needs to be stressed. The provincial support for schools and the development of community partnerships must be highlighted.

Press releases, interviews and school based news clips can all be utilized in highlighting this undertaking of renewal in our senior high school program.

Evaluation Strategy - In order to assess the effectiveness of the proposed changes it would seem to be logical to seek an outside institution such as U.P.E.I. or Holland College to be involved from the beginning to assess the developmental, implementation and educational effectiveness of the entire process.

The assessment of individual students will be addressed in the development of the individual course offerings. Employability skills profile criteria will be done in concert with the development of the School to Work/Life Transitions modules.

Ongoing input on evaluation and assessment will need to be obtained from the Evaluation Section of the Department of Education.

School to Work/Life Transition Strategy - The underlying and oft repeated theme of this

proposal is to allow our students to obtain the education that will best prepare them for life, employment and their role as responsible citizens of the next century. Anything that can be done to positively promote these goals needs to be considered. The concept of supporting the transitions of youth into the workforce is as old as human civilization itself. The current education system has supported transitions; however, there is much more that needs to be done to support the majority of our students who are not going to university.

This position paper will hopefully pave the way for more supports and opportunities being put in place for Prince Edward Island students.

Funding

The proposals outlined above will be expensive to fully implement. They must be considered as an investment in our future as past experience has shown that the students we are targeting in this proposal are the people who make up the majority of our Island workforce and citizens. If meaningful employment can be found, these citizens will be less likely to move "away" thus strengthening our economy. Those who decide to migrate will find that in the global market place a strong high school foundation will stand them in good stead. Therefore, the costs associated with this proposal should be money well spent.

Appendix 1

Philosophy of Education – Purpose, Basic Principles and Goals

Purpose

The purpose of the Prince Edward Island public education system is to provide for the development of children so that each may take a meaningful place in society. While on one level this purpose is direct and may be considered self-evident, on another level it raises questions about the principles underlying the education process and the specific goals of education.

The following is a brief explanation of the principles and expectations that apply to the Prince Edward Island public education system. Specific direction is then provided by a statement of the goals supporting the purpose and principles. The statement of philosophy concludes with a brief discussion of the roles played by learners, educators, parents, and other members of the community in the education process.

Basic Principles

Society recognizes a set of widely-held principles which provide a framework for public education. The principles identified for the Prince Edward Island education system are as follows:

Public education in Prince Edward Island is based on a quality program that respects the intrinsic value of the individual and centres on the development of each child.

The public education system recognizes that education is a responsibility shared among the school, the family, and the community.

The public education system demonstrates respect and support for fundamental human rights as identified in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the Prince Edward Island Human Rights Act.

The public education system reflects the character, cultural heritage, and democratic institutions of the society it serves.

The programs in the public education system reflect a contemporary view of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are of most worth to the individual and to society.

Goals

While the principles form the base upon which the education system is placed , a more precise set of goals is required to define the specific areas that are addressed by the public education system.

The goals of public education are to enable the student to:

- develop an appreciation for learning, an intellectual curiosity, and a desire for lifelong learning;
- develop the ability to think critically, apply knowledge, and make informed decisions;
- acquire the basic knowledge and skills necessary to comprehend and express ideas through the use of words , numbers, and other symbols;
- develop an understanding of the natural world and of the applications of science and technology in society;
- acquire knowledge about the past and an orientation to the future;
- develop an appreciation for one's own heritage and a respect for the culture and traditions of others;
- develop a sense of self-worth;
- develop a respect for community values, a sense of personal values, and a responsibility for one's own actions;
- develop a sense of pride and respect for one's community, province, and country;
- develop a sense of stewardship for the environment;
- develop creative skills, including those in the arts, and an appreciation of creativity in others;
- develop skills and attitudes related to the workplace;
- develop good mental and physical health and the ability to creatively use leisure time;
- acquire a knowledge of the second official language and an understanding of the bilingual nature of the country;
- develop an understanding of gender equity issues and of the need to provide equal opportunities for all;
- develop an understanding of fundamental human rights and an appreciation for the worth of all individuals.

While these are formidable goals for the public education system to undertake, it is important to reiterate that the responsibility for addressing these goals is a shared one. Only with the support and active participation of the family and other segments of the community will it be possible for the public education system to fulfill its mandate.

Appendix 2

Conference Board of Canada Employability Skills

The Conference Board has categorized the employability skills into three types . These are Academic Skills, Personal Management Skills and Teamwork Skills. A summary of these skills is noted below.

Academic Skills:

These include the ability to communicate, think and learn.

Communication skills include the ability to:

- Understand and speak one or more official language.
- Listen to understand and learn.
- Read, comprehend and use written materials including graphs , charts and displays.
- Write effectively.

Thinking skills include the ability to:

- Think critically and act logically to evaluate situations, solve problems and make decisions.
- Understand and solve problems involving mathematics and use the results.
- Use technology, instruments, tools and information systems effectively.
- Access and apply specialized knowledge from various fields.

Learning skills include the ability to:

- Continue to learn for life.

Personal Management Skills

These include the ability to demonstrate positive attitudes and behaviours, responsibility and adaptability.

Positive Attitudes and Behaviours are demonstrated by:

- Self-esteem and confidence.
- Honesty, integrity and personal ethics.
- A positive attitude toward learning, growth and personal health.
- Initiative, energy and persistence to complete tasks.

Responsibility is exhibited by:

- The ability to set goals and priorities in work and personal life.
- The ability to plan and manage time, money and other resources to achieve goals.

- Accountability for actions taken.

Adaptability is exhibited by:

- A positive attitude toward change.
- Recognition of and respect for people's diversity and individual differences.
- The ability to identify and suggest new ideas and ways of doing things.

Teamwork Skills

Those skills needed to work with others.

The Ability to Work With Others can be demonstrated by a person who can:

- Understand and work within the culture of the group.
- Plan and make decisions with others and support the outcomes.
- Respect the thoughts and opinions of others in the group.
- Exercise "give and take" to achieve group results.
- See a team approach as appropriate.
- Give and accept leadership when appropriate.

Appendix 3

High School Program

Present system: 8 credits @ 110 hours = 880 hours

New system: 32 modules @ 27.5 hours = 880 hours

Sample Only!

GRADE 10

Academic Core:

Language Arts	6 modules	165 hours	Compulsory
Mathematics	4 modules	110 hours	Compulsory
Science	4 modules	110 hours	Compulsory
Social Studies	4 modules	110 hours	Compulsory
Technology	2 modules	55 hours	Compulsory (Sched. with L. A.)
Total:	20 modules	550 hours	

Career & Life Skills Offerings: 4 modules must be taken from this section one of which must be Learning Skills.

Financial Management	1 module	27.5 hours	
Phys. Ed.	2 modules	55 hours	
Career Skills	2 modules	55 hours	
Life Management	2 modules	55 hours	
Learning/Study Skills	1 module	27.5 hours	Compulsory
Intro. C.E.C. Modules	1 module units	27.5 hours	per unit
Relationships	1 module	27.5 hours	

This schedule would leave up to 8 modules or two full credits available for other course selections (e.g. French, Music, Art, Other Career Courses).

GRADE 11
Academic Core:

Language Arts	6 modules	165 hours Compulsory
Mathematics	4 modules	110 hours Compulsory
Science	2 modules	55 hours Compulsory
Social Studies	2 modules	55 hours Compulsory
Total:	14 modules	440 hours

This leaves up to 18 modules open for specialized study to prepare for the workforce, college or university (e.g. Cooperative Work Study, more Academics, C.E.C., C.T.S., Apprenticeship, Music, Art, Life Skills and other courses).

Grade 12
Academic Core:

Language Arts	4 modules	110 hours Compulsory
Mathematics	4 modules	110 hours(Recommend)
Science	2 modules	55 hours Compulsory
Social Studies	2 Modules	55 hours Compulsory

Other
(For students not going to university or taking at least a two year course in a College)

Pre-Employment	4 modules	110 hours Compulsory
Total	16 modules	

This leaves up to 16 modules open for specialized study.

The use of modules presents several possibilities for schedulers depending on school opportunities and restrictions. Examples include:

- Having a two module course go every second day for a full semester.
- Having a one module course go every fourth day for a full semester.
- Dividing an 80 minute period into two of 40 minutes each and offer 2 module courses for 40 minutes each day all semester or 1 module courses for 40 minutes every second day all semester.
- Scheduling with 3 - 80 minute periods and 2 - 40 minute periods each day or similar

combinations (e.g. a.m Blocks A and B = 2 - 80 minute classes: p.m. Block C 1 = 40 minutes, Block D = 80 minutes, Block C2 = 40 minutes. The p.m. schedule could shift every second day.

- Other combinations are possible that can accommodate both 1, 2, or 4 module courses within the same framework.
- A modular based schedule would also allow a senior student to opt for a study period without having to only take 75% of course offerings which is presently often the case.
- Modules of courses could be added in areas of defined needs without usurping a full credit block of time.

Appendix # 4

Present System 8 Credits per year @ 110 hours each = 880 hours

Alternate System 10 credits per year @ 90 hours each =900 hours

The reality is that we are currently slightly less than 110 hours per credit and in the future would equate a 90 hour credit as one that runs for 1 hour each day all semester.

Sample Only!

Sample Schedule under this system. The day would consist of 5 one hour classes or a combination thereof (e.g. 4 one hour classes and 2 thirty minute classes).

Each full credit would consist of four 22.5 hour modules

Compulsory Courses

Grade 10

Mathematics	1.5 Credits	6 Modules	135 hours
Language Arts	1.5 Credits	6 modules	135 hours
Science	1 Credit	4 modules	90 hours
Social Studies	1 Credit	4 modules	90 hours
Life Skills	1 Credit	4 modules	90 hours
Technology	.5 Credit	2 modules	45 hours
Total	6.5 Credits	26 Modules	585 hours

This would leave 3.5 credits or 14 modules free for other course choices.

In order to facilitate scheduling a minimum of 2 modules would be grouped together to form a minimum half credit unit.

Grade 11

Compulsory Courses

Mathematics	1.5 credits	6 modules	135 hours
Language Arts	1.5 credits	6 modules	135 hours
Science	1 credit	4 modules	90 hours

Social Studies	1 credit	4 modules	90 hours
Total	5 credits	20 modules	450 hours

This leaves up to 5 Credits or 20 modules open for other course selections .

Grade 12

Compulsory Courses

Language Arts	2 Credits	8 modules	180 hours
Science	.5 Credit	2 modules	45 hours
Social Studies	.5 Credit	2 modules	45 hours

For students planning to enter the work force within two years

Pre-Employment	1 Credit	4 modules	90 hours

It is also recommended that University and College bound students complete another Mathematics Credit.

Mathematics	1 credit	4 modules	90 hours
Total	4 credits	16 modules	360 hours

In addition students must complete a total of at least six grade 12 level courses or twenty-four grade 12 level modules in order to graduate.

All of the positives noted in Appendix 3 would be applicable with this form of scheduling. In addition, students could sample a wider variety of courses especially in grade 10 and it should be possible in most schools to insure teachers one preparation period per day which is not always the case at present.

The change in the basic length of class from 75-80 minutes to 60 minutes might also be considered as a positive in many instances.

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In addition to the sources cited above valuable input into this proposal has been received from the Administration and Staffs of the Senior High Schools in the province, the Learning Managers/Instructors at Holland College as well as from Consultants, Coordinators and Directors at the Department of Education.

Various Internet sites were accessed, most notably Provincial Department of Education sites in Canada and State Education Department sites in the United States.